

HOLLISTON AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION
MINUTES

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Members present: Justin Brown (associate), Janet Horne, Natalie Kent (associate), PJ Kilkelly (associate), Tony Lulek, Helen MacArthur and Paula Mark.

Interested Parties: Bobby Blair, Rolf Briggs, Ryan Cheney, Andy Reseska, Kristen Serocki and Megan Taylor.

Meeting Called to Order: Chairperson, Tony Lulek called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Minutes of the Last Meeting: Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, to accept the minutes of the May 20, 2015 with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

Helen MacArthur, Treasurer, reported that the current balance in our account is \$11,766.54.

Andy Reseska, Boston Honey Company, spoke to the members relative to keeping bees on the Rogers Road property. There would be 8 pallets consisting of 32 hives. He would like to place the bees from now to November. PJ Kilkelly inquired as to if there would be any type of compensation. Andy Reseska stated that he would be willing to make a donation to the Agricultural Commission. Tony Lulek stated that we do need to raise funds. He would like to only make a commitment to do it this year because at present the commission is not sure as to what the future plans will be for the land. Andy stated that he would like to have the opportunity to put his hives on the property each year. There would be two to three people going to the property every couple of weeks to check on the hives. Andy stated that there are over 300 colonies at Wheeler Farm. Tony stated that he feels that this request needs to go before the selectmen for their approval. Janet Horne made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, to allow Boston Honey Company to place 32 hives on the Rogers Road property from now until November at a fee of \$25.00 per month, subject to the approval of the selectmen. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.

Butterfly Aviary: PJ Kilkelly reported that the first kits arrived today. He reported that the aviary will be ready to be opened to the public the end of this month. Helen MacArthur is getting all of the plants for the aviary. The planting of these plants as well as in front of the community garden will be on Saturday, June 20, 2015 at 1:00 PM. Helen will be picking up the plants the beginning of next week. Inside the aviary there will be 3 window boxes as well as a three tier octagon planter. We will have plants that are continuous blooming. The actual kickoff for the aviary will be on July 11, 2015 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM with a rain date of July 12, 2015. We would have a cookout at the event. PJ Kilkelly stated that he would like us to get a banner to put up. Tony Lulek will do a design for the banner and get it made. PJ Kilkelly stated that up to this point his expenses have been \$2,500 and he expects that there will be an additional \$1,000.00 in expenses. PJ stated that kits have been given to Extended Day, Daycare on Dudley Road and the Daycare at the Congregational Church. Helen MacArthur asked if the aviary

would be open all the time. PJ stated that there will be a sign on the door with the rules and times.

Community Garden: Natalie Kent reported that the garden is filled 100%. She has purchased hoses for the watering. Tony Lulek stated that we will need to do another weeding at the garden. Paula Mark stated that the cranberry patch was a lost cause and we need to rethink where we want to try to develop a cranberry patch. Natalie stated that everyone seems to like the wand approach. Presently there is no one on the wait list for a plot. Justin Brown suggested that possibly members of the Junior Agricultural Commission could take over the boxes where the cranberries had been. It was suggested that we would charge \$25.00 for these additional plots. PJ reported that the town has fixed the fence. Tony Lulek reported that he had been contacted by Chip Thurlow of the Bullard Memorial Farm relative to helping with putting in community gardens for the needy at their property. Tony told Chip that at present the Commission is not taking on any new projects. Chip is going to come back to talk to us in the fall.

Grants: Natalie Kent reported that she had not heard anything relative to the Garden Club and the Celebrate Holliston grant. Tony Lulek stated that we did not get a grant from the Garden Club this year. PJ Kilkelly stated that the grants have already been awarded from Celebrate Holliston and since we have not heard anything obviously we did not get a grant. All the members of the commission thanked Natalie for all the work that she did on the grants and her success in getting funds for the aviary.

Rogers Road Property: Tony Lulek and Paula Mark would like to go to the Selectmen with a tentative plan relative to the property. Tony stated that Rodenheiser has offered their assistance. Tony stated that he would like to go forward and put together an advisory committee. Paula reported that she has reached out to surveyors relative to getting the property surveyed. GLM has stated that they will submit a proposal by the end of this week. It was suggested to talk to Joyce at GLM to work with us relative to the fee. Tony reported that the Conservation Committee is working on rewriting the CR. Robert Weidknecht and Mary Greendale have volunteered to help. Justin Brown stated that we need to put a document together with a plan in forming a 501(C)3. Tony mentioned that we should talk to Lynda Simpkins relative to the advisory board. PJ stated that we need to get input from people in town. We need to work on documentation for the selectmen. Tony reported that a notice was left at the house from Eversource relative to them turning off the electricity due to an overdue bill in the amount of \$525.00. Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, that we pay the Eversource bill in the amount of \$525.00 from the Agricultural Commission fund. The motion passed unanimously. Rolf Briggs spoke to the group relative to a fellow who works for him who would be interested in living in the house and to be the caretaker. Rolf stated that he comes from the rural Vermont farming community. He came to Rolf with outstanding recommendations. He is very hands on and responsible. If it did come about that he would be living in the house as the caretaker, he would take care of maintaining the property such as mowing and snow removal. Tony stated that he would have to do some investigation as to having a caretaker at the house. He will talk to the selectmen about this. Rolf Briggs also stated that on Arbor Day he with five guys removed trees, with permission from the Conservation Commission, from the property. He has expressed an interest in having an all day workshop with Dan Tilton, a Swedish chainsaw expert, at the property on October 9, 2015. The workshop would be from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

with a limit of 50 participants. He would make a donation to the Agricultural Commission for the use of the property. Justin Brown stated that he thinks that it is a great idea. It was brought up that when the property was walked on Sunday, June 7, 2015, it was noted that deer stands have been put up. Kristen Serocki stated that those stands are on their property. Inasmuch as the Rogers Road property is now town property, signs need to be posted for "No Hunting".

Website: Justin Brown stated that he has posted the open position on the Commission on the website. He has taken Donna Kramer's name off of the list of members. He stated that he is still trying to determine how to post the minutes and agenda. It was suggested that he supply a link to the town website for this information. It was felt that the butterfly aviary should have its own page on the website. PJ also requested to have cranberry information put on the website.

Miscellaneous: A letter of interest has been received from Tyla Doolin relative to an appointment to an Associate Member position on the Agricultural Commission. PJ Kilkelly, senior Associate Member, stated that he is considering moving to regular status. It was decided not to make any decisions at this meeting and to hold it to the next meeting. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 30, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

Paula Mark made a motion, seconded by Helen MacArthur, to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

All Members

Saturday, June 20, 2015 – 1:00 PM – planting in the butterfly aviary and in front of the Community Garden as well as doing weeding as needed.

Posting of "No Hunting" signs at the Rogers Road property.

Tony

Present to the Selectmen for their approval the request from Boston Honey Company to place 32 hives on the Rogers Road Property.

Talk to the Selectmen relative to a caretaker living at the Rogers Road house.

Attend a Selectmen's meeting with a tentative plan for the Rogers Road property.

Design and make arrangements for printing a banner for the Butterfly Aviary.

Paula

Follow up with GLM relative to survey of Rogers Road property.

Attend a Selectmen's meeting with a tentative plan for the Rogers Road property.

Helen MacArthur

Pick up plants for the Butterfly Aviary.

Justin Brown

Establish a page on the website strictly for the Butterfly Aviary.

Put information on cranberries on the website.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Horne, Clerk